UNITY

AND THE UNIVERSITY.

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

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SAM JONES is credited with the remark that he "hates theology and botany but loves religion and flowers", which as coming from him, and as being in substance a move towards comparative religious thought, has an importance not at all understood, it is probable, by its author.

AN exchange says: "It sounds comical to hear an ordinary congregation singing, 'Jesus, I my cross have taken, all to leave, and follow Thee!' Think of a woman with a silk gown on and a stuffed bird in her hat standing up and singing, 'Naked, poor, despised, forsaken, Thou from hence my all shall be.'"

THERE is a time when for a man to fail to speak his thought argues a cowardice that would show him to be unworthy to be entrusted with anything so sacred and necessary as a new glimpse of the divine. Controversy is oftimes rooted in the very being of a man, and the hour conspires with the character to evoke utterance.

JOHN BURROUGHS never did a more excellent thing than when he took the intemperate Ruskin to task for his actually stupid disparagement of Darwin. No facts in literary history are more moving than those which show the inability of Carlyle and Ruskin to recognize their compeers in the work of bringing the age out to its truth to itself.

A CORRESPONDENT asks why so small a number of the theological graduates in recent years are either able or willing to do pioneer or missionary work; why they so invariably ask and expect an organized parish; not only that, but they so persistently push for the most desirable places socially and pecuniarily. Our correspondent of much experience further asks if there be not "something wrong with the parishes that prefer the ministrations of the callow, untried and immature graduates, to experienced able men with records behind them."

HEBER NEWTON has moved with his known impulsive generosity to the support of George's candidacy for mayor of New York city. It warms one's often-hesitating faith in the possibilities of the pulpit to meet with men of this stamp, circumstanced right in the circle of the less broadening faiths, who step beyond all narrowed bounds of sect upon the broad field of common work. Right or wrong in theory or in their confidence in or choice of political means, the interest manifested is of itself happy and hopeful.

T.

WE often meet with preachers nowadays who declare for absolute fellowship between the Christian sects, but we only rarely meet with members of the clergy who are willing to extend this suffrage to faiths not based upon the life of Jesus. Of course I refer to the orthodox ministers solely. Unitarians are beyond the lines of the old mistakes. It is manifest to thinkers, and it is coming to be so acknowledged, that a rule of religious history that fails to see the equal relationship in love of all earth's peoples is run out in the face of fact and experience. T.

A CORRESPONDENT writes: "I am surprised to find so many who are unwilling to admit that the promotion of righteousness, truth and love is a religious object." This surprise greatens when we remember that religion without these verities has always been soiled with coarseness, weighted with superstition, without these it has sheltered prejudices, housed bigots, thwarted progress, opposed culture, and badgered science. With these it has relieved suffering, dispelled ignorance, softened savagery, refined barbarism, modified the bitterness of sect, mellowed the harshness of creeds, and culminates in the clear vision that shows that morality is the highest fruit of religion. For this the tree exists, and where the fruit is found, there is sufficient evidence that the tree thrives.

THERE are some indefinite rumors from Rome that the Pope and his advisers are taking a backward tack in their relations to the Italian government. The correspondent of the New York *Tribune* goes further, and asserts that the decree by which the religious is put above the secular conscience for all loyal Catholic Italians is intended as well to direct American Catholics, who, by that decisive command, must, to some degree, show that they are affected by the Papal position. These things are interesting, if true—interesting, in fact, if not true. Theoretically there is nothing more abhorrent to the idea of free government than the Papal sovereignty. In this country thinkers follow with a curious eye the line of Catholic-American development, for it is evident that the time may come when wise Americans may have to register themselves upon the superior loyalty. Patriotism in practice, theology in theory, are factors by which Rome must lose tenure here or Catholics must yield their citizenship. T.

When a reconciliation is sought between two parties that have been at variance each must be willing to go more than half way to meet the other. Each party must go what will seem to it more than half way. We of the Western Conference can do this in regard to the Cincinnati matter without the sacrifice of principle and without loss of dignity, for very few meant by that resolution to change anything; it was all a mistake to think that there was an intention on the part of the majority to make Unitarianism mean anything different from what it has always meant. And now that it has been so much misunderstood there is no reason why we should not repeal it to satisfy those who have been so frightened or offended by it. It is only a resolution, not a new constitution. It is not a "basis" of anything, it is only an expression of opinion or sentiment, an expression we can do without if it cause our brethren to misunderstand first and then to misrepresent us. U.

THEISM.

However religion may begin, it ends in a consciousness of the divine presence. Devotion is the attitude of the enlightened spirit in the conscious presence of realities. When a sense of law fills the night, an invisible companionship besets us in the daylight, when our lawlessness is checked with a sense of awe, and our finite petulance is stayed, soothed and changed into patience as we think of the infinite deliberation out of which we came, a part of which we now are, and from which we cannot be separated; then we are religious, no matter what church we belong to, or whether we wear any church name, or sectarian label. When our thinking lands us in thoughtfulness, and our search for truth discloses measureless depths beyond the reach of our plummet, then again we are religious. When our loving makes all things seem more lovely, and touches our heart with a great pity for a suffering world, then are we religious. On the other hand, the very essence of impiety, the culminating atheism, is found in self-conceit. He who finds the world moving around himself, and walks with irreverent feet through all the gardens of the Lord, except such as seem to grow his own thoughts and feelings, is blind with impiety. He has thought poorly who thinks meanly of anything that has upon it the mystic impress of the creative power. That is very irreligious inquiry that brings to the inquirer more religious confidence in his own words and symbols of truth than in that divine search that is forever unsatisfied because it consciously drinks of water drawn from exhaustless springs. "Thine is the Kingdom, the Power and the Glory", is the exclamation of science. There is a power not ourselves that makes for beauty, order and love. It is to this regnant power that the stars move in procession. For his glory the seasons come and go. In his kingdom do we find peace and strength in our commonest toil. It is because he trusts this power that the farmer plants his corn in May that he may gather in November. It is out of faith in this majesty that the school-boy sends his ball to the bat, the carpenter balances his ridge-pole and fits his rafters, and the house-wife bakes her bread. Look anywhere, touch anything, and you are confronted with this infinite power of God, which dwarfs the greatest achievement of man, makes imbecile our highest boast. Wherever water flows, and sunlight lifts the pine-tree's needled cone upward; wherever vapors rise and rains fall; whoever understands in the slightest way the celerity of light or the docility and certainty of the telegraph; he who speaks through telephone, or harnesses the steam; he who listens to the wail of the winds, or feels the pulse at his wrist, reads a revelation of Him, to whom belongs "Kingdom, Power and Glory, Forever and Ever".

But reading all this and more, learning the marvelous harmony that runs all these powers into one, that recognizes the unity that binds planet and pebble in one law, that links in one brotherhood light, heat, electricity and all the mystic manifestations of the One Power that worketh in and through what we call nature, in every place and every time; we have read but a few leaves in the Old Testament of God's real Bible. If we would touch the *gospel*, the New Testament in this book of revelation, we must touch that great power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness; we must feel the shock of that electricity that smites wickedness, contemplate that power that bursts the stratified rocks of error and cruelty, that seem as solid as the Alleghanies, and as secure as the foundations of Charleston. Whence comes that power that makes the centuries more tender; teaches the generations charity; hurls into oblivion the greatest achievements of tyrants; blots out the names of those who swayed the scepter of empire in iniquity? Who has made the name of Alexander, world conqueror, though he was, a reproach; and that of Socrates, the unfavored stone-cutter of Athens, a delight to the ears of men? What was it that defeated those mighty schemes of the Pharaohs to preserve their names and fame in the earth? Why are they now so utterly forgotten, unhonored, and unknown, in spite of the mighty pyramids, the solemn tombs, and their ingeniously wrought records of praise, triumph, and power? These, if read at all, are read with distrust, because the Pharaohs were not in league with the power that makes for righteousness. On the other hand, an unnamed woman of Bethany is known throughout the whole world, as one who bathed the feet of a Nazarene peasant who went about doing good, and anointed for the burial the head of him who went to his martyrdom for truth's sake. When Savonarola, that splendid Florentine, the Luther before Luther, was trying to reform the state, and effect the political life of a city, he was asked, "if he hoped by this to make himself pope", he replied, "If I accomplish this I shall be greater than the pope." Why is he to-day more honored even by the church that burned him than any pope in its calendar? It is because there is that in the universe that sets its seal of approval upon excellence, that in the higher realm of human nature secures the survival of the noblest; as in the lower realms of nature it secures the survival of the strongest. You remember how in the play the great Cardinal, when all other resources failed to protect his innocent ward, rises to the height of his mighty personality, and says, "Around that prostrate form I draw the sacred circle of our Holy Church. Upon him who dares set foot within that circle I hurl the awful curse of Rome", and the villains cower and slink back. In the long story of the ages we see a power, greater than Richelieu's, that does draw a circle around innocence and purity, around loveliness and loyalty, more potent than that of the church of Rome. It has caused brutality and lust, coarseness and cruelty, tyranny and lying to fall back into the darkness. It may be hard for us to verify this power in the short ranges of our human experience. The lines of Providence are long lines, and seventy years does not give length enough for us to measure their inclinations, or to determine their trend, but none can fail to read in the long story of the centuries that gospel that tells of the "Kingdom and Power and Glory" of Him who has defeated the wicked, wiped out nations for their iniquity, blasted the prospects of the selfish. This is the power that has decreed that Victor Hugo, the great lover of man, is to have a dominion on earth more potent and perennial than Napoleon, conqueror of men. And France will be taught to love Victor Hugo, who believed in truth, righteousness and love, more than Bonaparte, who believed so mightily in himself. Shall we not ascribe "Kingdom, Power and Glory forever" to him who has vetoed, sooner or later, every iniquitous enactment of superstitious church or unrighteous state?

But we have not yet touched the beatitudes of the gospel of this great New Testament of the universe. These lead us up the mountain of our own inner lives, and there we recognize that to which all "Kingdom, Power and Glory" is due, encouraging us in every good endeavor, chiding us in every lawless act. Nothing less than this infinite majesty paints our cheek with the blush of shame, hangs

the chambers of our hearts with blackness when we do wrong, fills them with delight when we seek the right. He is the revealer within us; he leads us in the paths of peace, and causes brambles to grow in the way of unrighteousness. The power that guides the comets, breaks thrones, and crowns the loving, is that which ordains that every good deed shall bring, as George Eliot says, the added power to do another, and every evil thought become like the dragon's teeth in the fable—seed, which when sowed, spring up armed men to thwart and to discipline us.

Contributed Articles.

BEYOND THE BLOSSOM.

The infant bud, the youthful bloom,
Hold promise sweet and beauty rare;
But both may lie in Springtime's tomb
With nothing left to scent the air.

'Tis fruit that speaks the life and worth
Of spreading tree and clinging vine,
The later Autumn's solemn mirth,
The clusters crushed to sparkling wine.

So, in life's golden Autumn time,
The vines their purple wealth unload;
Or, in a sere and somber clime,
The crushed heart fills the cup of God.

WILLIAM W. FELLOWS.

MUSKEGON, Mich.

EVOLUTION.

Evolution;—The *Unfolding;*—the eternal, necessary Growth of things;—that is the Word of the future.

In it you must find the faith and the religion of our children; the inspiration, the devotion, the morals, the manners, the doings and the saintliness of the future. It is the great religious Word which comes upon our age, as upon another came Christ's "My Father". It means higher, deeper, firmer Faith, more of saintly devotion, more of glad and rapturous worship, more of communion with God; and above, all more servants and sons of God on Earth.

Revolution has been the faith and religion of the past; sudden conversions; miracles; divine interpositions in flame and thunder; sudden world creations, and as sudden world destructions. God was supposed to work by fits and turns, jerkingly. His grace was something exceptional. He undid all the past, whenever He did something new. His method was Revolution.

Evolution means: "Look and behold; the World grows towards perfection; all things move on from glory unto glory; eternally, silently, surely. Such is the way of things; come, let us worship!"

Evolution contains all ever contained in faith in God; it is faith in Eternal Wisdom, in Infinite Goodness and Love; it is to "be still and know" no reason for fear.

The sudden fall of a rock makes us start; but Evolution says: "Before thou wast, this was beginning". Evolution means the sound of a Voice above every natural catastrophe, the rolling stone, the land-slide, the shooting star, saying: "Be still, and know that I am God."

We face a case of human loss, of human misery, over which Despair hangs thick and dark and heavy, but Evolution sends a ray through the Darkness and whispers in our ear: "Be still, and know that I am God." Evolution teaches us perfect *Trust.* It shows us all in motion animated with Goodness and Wisdom, growing towards Perfection.

"I am, God", sing the spinning worlds and the rolling stones, the beating heart and the glittering dewdrops. Where can we flee but He is there? Into the depths of the grove, and behold is He not there? Into the hells of Sin and behold, His arms are underneath us, and His Love encircles us.

Evolution means *Hope*, freed from all fetters and fears. It is *Growth,*—from worse to better. Thou growest; thy work increaseth. Cast forth thy seed in the morning, and cease not with the evening; the soil of the Universe will receive it all, and bring it all to fruition in its season. Though it take a thousand years, the blossom comes at last with the perfume thou didst intend. It never fails while the atoms hold together. God is.

Thou art a growth. Behold from what thou hast grown; that savage, that brute; nay in truth that handful of dust is what thou hast been shaped out of by the action of the circling forces of the Universe; by the pressure of Beneficent Laws. Thou art a growth. Thou art as a "green olive-tree in the garden of the Lord". Be thou a "co-worker" with thy Lord in that garden, for thereunto also He called thee, by thine Intelligence, Conscience and Heart. Feed and nurture by daily effort all entrusted to thy care; thine own being; seek the light; be "full of sap, as the cedars of Lebanon". Every effort tells; little things make the Greatnesses in this Universe. *Grow* thou up "into the fulness of the stature of Christ"; hope for nothing less; have no meaner goal in this life than that "whereunto thou art also called".

Evolution is an inspiration to Work; it holds up the hands of the reformer (in reforming himself or society). Evolution means to believe in the infinite Reformability of all things. Evolution means: "so thou can muster strength, thou canst better all things." "Bettering", it says, "is the Way of the Universe, the Everlasting Will." Every reformer is a co-worker with Nature, a helper of the Universe. The reformer delivers the Universe of its own intention; he works the works of God; he is the instrument of the Divine Will as poets and preachers are its interpreters. Evolution teaches us to see that, by the very *Ideal Sense* developed in us, we are called to be co-workers together with God,—in bringing His Will more and more to be done on earth. Our Ideals are the whisperings of the Eternal to us, of what He wants done, what He means, what His Idea is with us and with the world. And in so far as we follow these whisperings we help on the Evolution,—the Unfolding of the Mind of God in the World,—are in truth his servants and his sons or daughters.

Yes, Evolution shall teach us to recognize in our *Ideals* the whispering of God, the Word of God; it shall make us feel that not only are we in God, but He in us; that He so loves us that He not only is good to us, but confides to us his Thoughts, his Plans, his Ideas, and asks us to help him, to serve him; to be co-workers together with him. This is where Evolution places Man.

And with what sacred hatred of Evil, Evolution endows us; with what a desire to fight and to crush it; with what a dignity it clothes all struggle against Evil. For Evolution teaches us that Evil is real Evil,—not a shadow, not a superstition, not an arbitrary, human distinction; but the *Imperfection* of God's Work,—which he endows us with Reason, Conscience, Heart and Ideal Sense to help remove. Evil is Imperfection,—hateful even in the sight of God; hateful as discord to the musician, as Insanity to Reason, as Hatred to Love. Evolution says to us in tones of deepest entreaty: "In proportion to the good that is in you, help to destroy Evil, to *overcome* Evil; in the name of God." "Let your light shine before men." Work, while it is day!" "Love, save!" Gird up your loins, gather yourselves together and go out to War against the great Enemy; and cease not till all Evil be destroyed. For Evolution brightens the struggle with the certainty of victory. Evil is Imperfection; only temporary; it shall vanish away; it shall be no more on earth; it shall be no more in the entire Universe; but it shall all be made "The Kingdom of our God."

Thus Evolution contains the fulfillment of all previous oracles, teachings and feelings after truth.

And what Words of glory we shall read in that *Unfolding of the Eternal!* What a flaming Scripture that is! What mysteries and splendors, material and spiritual, it contains in its Law and Gospel, Histories and Prophecies, Wisdom and Song of songs of Reality!

Oh, fearlessly write *Evolution* and call it your creed. Fearlessly write it and call it your platform and covenant. Fearlessly write it and call it the truth you are here to bear witness to; fearlessly write it and call it the Eternal Gospel you are sent to preach to the multitudes. Write it on the high altar; write it on the pulpit; write it on the church-door; write it on the door-posts of your homes, and on your walls; show it in your eye; teach it to your children; EVOLUTION, *the World grows; God is.* Send it to the widow; whisper it to the dying; speak it to the rich; show it to the faint and disheartened ones, call it to the indifferent; thunder it to sinners; preach it to the whole World: EVOLUTION; *the World grows; God is.*

H. TAMBS LYCHE.

WARWICK, Massachusetts.

REPORT OF THE WESTERN CONFERENCE TO THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE.

SARATOGA, SEPTEMBER 20—24.

In complying with the summons of your secretary to present at this meeting a report of the work of the Western Unitarian Conference, I labor under the disadvantage of having been but a few months the incumbent of the office of Western Secretary, and cannot therefore speak with that personal knowledge of its general work for the last two years which gives special life and interest to a report of this kind. Still, I assure you, there was never so much to report as now, and the failure, if any, will be in the reporter, not in the fullness of things to be reported.

THE GROWTH OF THE WESTERN CONFERENCE.

Whoever speaks for the Western Conference to-day no longer represents a body maintaining merely the simplest form of organic life but for a quite complex organism. Following the law of evolution, it has, within the last few years, put forth a Head(quarters), in which a deal of thinking is done, at 175 Dearborn street, Chicago.

It has developed two good arms—labeled Women's Western Unitarian Conference and Western Unitarian Sunday-school Society. It has found a strong prophetic voice in the Western Publishing Committee, which is making itself heard far and wide, sending forth its clear, earnest presentations of Unitarian beliefs, inciting to reverent thought and worship and the religious education of the young.

It has also become the parent of several vigorous offspring in the shape of State Conferences, christened respectively Iowa, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Kansas, Nebraska, etc., and these are putting forth tentacles of their own and becoming the centers of new life and activity.

THE HEADQUARTERS.

The headquarters is a busy center of our denominational life in the West. It contains the desks of the Secretaries of the Western Conference, the Women's Conference, the Sunday-School Society, and the editor of UNITY. It is also the Channing Club Room. It is the rendezvous of Unitarian ministers and laymen both in and out of Chicago, and a sort of general intelligence office for the denomination at large.

It is the depository of our publications, including a full line of A. U. A. tracts, and a good assortment of A. U. A. books. When a brother from Massachusetts concludes to go West and grow up with the country, it is to this office he writes for information and direction. If a preacher is wanted at Thompson's Station to break the Unitarian bread of life to hungry souls, or a church is to be organized, or a minister ordained in Colorado, or a brother in Wisconsin or Michigan wants his pulpit supplied for a Sunday, it is to this office that application is made. If material is wanted for the Sunday-school at Santa Barbara or Bloomington, or if the army of post-office mission workers throughout the west want material for distribution, it is here they turn for supplies. It is to this center that the Sunday-school teachers of our Chicago churches come every Monday noon to consider the lesson for the next Sunday under the leadership of one of the ministers of the city. This is the meeting place of the boards of directors of our different branches of western work. It is the place of hospitality, the promoter of fellowship, the indispensable condition of organic life and growth to our cause in the West.

THE WOMEN'S WESTERN CONFERENCE

has been doing most effective service. It is promoting an intelligent interest among our women in Unitarian ideas and work. It is producing a body of earnest, consecrated women full of zeal and enthusiasm for our cause, abounding in good works and in missionary labors.

The Chicago Women's Unitarian Association, auxiliary to the Conference, with its one hundred and ninety-four members, deserves especial mention, as an effective agency in uniting and inspiring the Unitarian women of Chicago. It is one aim of the Women's Conference to multiply such societies throughout the west. But the work by which the Women's Conference is best known and through which it is accomplishing the most immediate results is the post-office mission, by means of which a large amount of lay talent is brought into service, and thousands of copies of Unitarian publications are distributed to eager readers from Vermont to California, from Michigan to Florida. This work is done with so much method and with such personal sympathy and interest that it is likely to produce large results with small waste of money and material.

North and south, east and west, on the most distant outposts of civilization, men and women and children through this agency are brought into personal communication with earnest minds and religious spirits in Illinois, Ohio, Iowa, or Missouri, and are enlightened and stimulated by the ministry of this mission. Thus we have a complete network of magnetic lines of sympathy crossing and recrossing each other in all directions throughout the country. The report of the secretary of the Women's Conference shows that in the last two years 63,567 papers and tracts have been distributed to 2,564 people. We cannot fail to see how increasingly important a branch of Unitarian work this must prove itself. It is the sowing of seed which must yield, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred fold.

In this connection, I cannot forbear to mention the lamented death of Miss Ellis, of Cincinnati, out of whose earnest and loving spirit the post-office mission blossomed as a fragrant flower of sympathy and help. Long will she live

> "In minds made better by her presence,
> In pulses stirred to generosity,
> In deeds of daring rectitude, in scorn
> For miserable aims that end with self."

Long will she

> "Be to other souls
> The cup of strength in some great agony,
> * * * the sweet presence of a good diffused."

Sustained as she was by the women of Cincinnati, she illustrated the large possibilities of post-office mission work which other secretaries are already in some degree beginning to realize.

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY

is gradually bringing about a revolution in our Sunday-schools. It is introducing method and seriousness into our Sunday-school work; giving us a good variety of carefully prepared lessons, a higher order of music and liturgical services which cultivate the spirit of worship and the habit of devout expression in the young. The importance of this work cannot be over-estimated. We are doing nothing in the west more carefully and nothing of greater value to the Unitarian cause. This work is in the hands of a picked company elected to their places from year to

year because they belong there, and working together with a noble unselfishness not often matched. What this society has done, what it hopes to do and what spirit animates it, you will gather from the report of its Secretary, Mrs. E. T. Leonard, this afternoon.

THE PUBLISHING COMMITTEE

has within the last two years published 54,437 tracts and new editions of previous publications amounting to 13,000, making a total of 67,437. The publication of UNITY Short Tracts was begun in May, 1885, since when fifteen have been issued, and out of the 36,614 published, 28,708 have been sold and distributed.

Of tract No. 13—"Blessed be Drudgery", over 13,000 copies have been sold.

Of Unity Mission tracts, including new editions, 30,323 have appeared within the last two years.

No. 28, just out, entitled "Love to God and Love to Man", is a collection of forty-seven songs for Revival Tunes, to be sold at five cents a copy. It is a rather daring attempt to wed our rational religious feeling and thought to music which has heretofore been the accompaniment of a more sensational and dramatic form of religion than ours can claim to be.

Let me call especial attention to Nos. 18, 19, 21, which consist of brief biographical sketches of, and selections from the works of our three great masters—Channing, Parker and Martineau. Each tract is a little book in itself, containing an index of contents, and a collection of the best thoughts on many subjects of these three great prophets of our faith. Besides these, two series of Church-Door Pulpit sermons, twenty each, have been published. These have been especially interesting as bringing us contributions from gifted minds of various and widely separated religious connections. Discontinued as a separate publication, the Church-Door Pulpit is still preaching through the UNITY supplement, which is designed to appear semi-monthly.

THE STATE CONFERENCES

are slowly developing strength and resources. Four out of seven within our Western Conference bounds, through the assistance of our ever generous mother, the A. U. A., are employing state secretaries, who are actively pushing missionary work. We are learning to value these conferences as most important agencies in the advancement of our general work.

To cultivate our territory by State lines is, we believe, to develop a State consciousness and enthusiasm from which we may hope for large results. Given a State conference alive and active and you may count on growth in the number and prosperity of your churches from year to year. Of these conferences I should speak more particularly but for the special report upon the subject to be presented by Mr. Forbush.

WESTERN PAPERS.

A few years ago Western Unitarianism was without a single journal devoted to its interests. Now we have a weekly, a semi-monthly, and a monthly. UNITY, edited by J. Ll. Jones and others, has attained the dignity of volume XVIII, number 3. It is issued weekly. Its publishing interests are growing in importance and its subscription list shows a gain of about 25 per cent. in the last sixteen months. *Our Best Words*, edited by Jasper L. Douthit, at Shelbyville, Ill., has become a fortnightly. It is published every other Saturday at 75 cents a year. The *Unitarian*, which borrows one editor from Boston, Brooke Herford, the other being J. T. Sunderland of Chicago, is published monthly at 50 cents a year. The first number was issued in January last. It is an attempt to furnish a paper of 28 pages at a low price, to serve as a liberal missionary throughout the country, and the rapidity with which its first edition of 10,000 was exhausted would argue a strong demand for the paper.

The work of church building is going cheerily on in the west. In respect to this, I quote from the report of my predecessor, given at Cincinnati in May last: "The past year of the conference has been pre-eminently a *building* year. One church—the beautiful stone structure at Madison, Wis.—has been finished and dedicated. The basement story of another, that of the Scandinavian society in Minneapolis, has been completed within the year, and we have now in the west no less than eight other churches in process of erection, namely: one at Topeka, Kansas; one at Helena, Wisconsin; one in Minneapolis, Minnesota (that of Mr. Simmons's society, making with Mr. Janson's two in that city); All Souls Church, Chicago; a church at Midland, Michigan; one at Manistee, Michigan; one at Grand Rapids, Michigan; and one in St. Joseph, Missouri—in all ten churches built or building during the year. And then, besides these, steps are being taken toward building in four other places, viz.: Kansas City, Missouri; Beatrice, Nebraska; Denver and Greeley, Colorado; so that there is building activity this year in no less than fourteen western places." Mr. Sunderland's report continues: "If the past has been eminent as a building year it has also been a year of excellent prosperity in the way of church organization. * * We have for the year no less than ten new movements, seven of them already organized churches." This does not include one at Warren, Ill., which has taken shape since the date of this report. "This is certainly," continues the report, "most encouraging. It has all been quiet work: it has attracted little attention, but it seems to be work which, for the most part, will be likely to endure." [See page 193 of the Conference number of UNITY, June 5, 1886.]

Since this report was given, several of the churches mentioned therein as in process of building have been completed. I would call especial attention to four of these churches, because of the light they throw on the problem of church building. All Souls Church, Chicago, combining parsonage and church, of attractive and unique architecture, was built at a cost of ten thousand dollars, contributed by hundreds of friends east and west. It is the result of Brother Jones's arduous toil and the fruition of his hopes. Another enterprise of the same indefatigable worker has been the building of the Helena church, Wisconsin, which is a wonder of completeness and beauty, for the sum of sixteen hundred dollars. The church at Topeka, Kansas, of tasteful design and admirable arrangement, cost but $3,500, and the Midland church, Michigan, complete in all its appointments, was built for $2,400. This new departure in church building ought to commend itself to the good sense and moral sense of our people. To put less money into towers and spires, to build within our means and such churches as accommodate our actual needs, is surely the part of wisdom and honesty. We owe a debt of gratitude to those who are showing us how this thing can be done. To the church building fund and to the American Unitarian Association we are debtors continually for the timely lift, the generous assistance without which our church building schemes could not have been consummated.

For twenty years I have been associated with the Western Conference. My lot has been cast in three different states. I have traveled over eighteen thousand miles in Illinois in the last three years in pursuance of my work as Secretary of the State Conference, and have conversed with many people, and I am persuaded that Unitarianism on the whole, in the field that has come under my observation, was never so constructive, never so thoughtful, never so sincerely religious as now.

The ministers were never more appreciative of the treasures of religious faith and knowledge which have come down to us from the past, never so sure that religion is fundamental in the human soul, that it will remain unshaken before every assault.

We have appreciated to the full the advantage of our position, as stated recently by one of the fathers of our faith in Boston. "One of our main advantages as here-

tics", says Mr. Clarke, "is freedom from the care of our reputation. The theologians have already prejudiced the public against us as much as possible: and no matter what we say, they cannot make the matter worse. Thus we are saved from the necessity of watching our own shadow and can go boldly forward following the truth."

If this represents the eastern situation, and I have not the slightest doubt that it does, then my predecessor, Mr. Sunderland, spoke truly two years ago, when he said in his report to this Conference: "Let me assure the friends of the East that the West and the East were never so near together in sympathy as they are now." I am glad to add my testimony that the situation is unchanged at this date.

JOHN R. EFFINGER, *Sec'y.*

"COMFORT" IN RATIONAL RELIGION.

I heard some one say, "What *comfort* is there in rational religion?" I enumerate a *few* of these comforts:

1. A belief that "God" is not an arbitrary, limited, cruel-kind, self-contradictory ruler in man-like guise, but helpful and changeless Order.

2. A belief that progress is not at an end, that the "final word" is not yet spoken, but that nobler, and better things are yet to be.

3. A belief that the children of earth are not fallen angels, but risen men, with power inherent in them of still greater self-exaltation.

4. A belief that life's evils are not "sent of God", nor "permitted by him", but in the order of nature, and largely within man's own control.

5. A belief that all men are not equally responsible, but each according to his ability.

6. A belief that morality and human brotherhood are one with the universe's highest order and humanity's highest life, and therefore to be cultivated not for any merely arbitrary or sentimental reason (such as the "Will of God" or "Love for Christ"), but for the practical upbuilding of man.

7. And for the future,—I trust it; confident that if, in the order of the universe, it be best that I live again, I shall live; and happy, if otherwise, that I have lived at all, to taste the joy of even a few of Nature's myriad surprises; that I have lived to see the red of morning skies, and the pale, luminous stars, the gray of mountains, the blue of the sea, the purple petals of flowers, and the eyes of those I love. Comfort greater than this I know I do not deserve. Comfort greater than this I do not know that I ask.

JAMES H. WEST.

DEVOTIONAL MEETINGS.

The maintenance of devotional meetings has been found to a limited extent in Unitarian churches. At the Conferences, the anniversary meetings and special occasions, the day usually begins with a devotional meeting. But the home usage of many of the churches finds no practice of social worship. The omission is to be earnestly deplored. It tends to alienate the young people who form religious attachments at the devotional meetings of other churches. It hinders the social conference of the members of the society, which is desirable for the promotion of its interests. A social service for religious culture is being maintained by some of our societies. The best interests of our churches require that the social service should become general. To promote the interests of this meeting and other uses we need a popular collection of religious songs.

"The Carol" contains much that can be used at such services, but it is more especially a book for children. Let us imagine the pamphlet from UNITY headquarters, "Love to God and Love to Man", grown into a full collection, approved by many competent workers, with words and music printed together, and we shall have a good help to the maintenance of the social service.

Such a collection, and the Sunday-school manuals of song, may well have a limited number of church tunes. The practice of singing together at the social service ought to be an aid to congregational singing and generally improve the musical practice of the people. UNITY has done good work in the direction of social culture in a literary direction. Let us receive from it as much help in the direction of social devotion, and new obligations will be the result. The social service would be an education for the laity in the expression of their own religious thought, which is very much to be desired. L. C.

The Study Table.

The Carol: A collection of religious songs for the Sunday-school and the home, by Charles W. Wendte. Published by the John Church Co., Cincinnati and New York. Price, 35 cents, or $3.60 per dozen.

The appearance of this book has been awaited with interest by many Sunday-school workers. The popularity of the "Sunny Side" insured a welcome to the second work by its author. "The Carol" offers "poetical contributions by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, Miss Louisa M. Alcott, Susan Coolidge, Hezekiah Butterworth, Samuel Longfellow and others, with music, original and selected, by well known American composers, together with a careful selection of hymns, chorals, carols, and anthems from English and German sources, to which are added services for Sunday-school worship and the festivals of the church." Such is the well kept promise of the title page. One hundred and eighty pages of hymns, chorals and anthems are presented, a liberal proportion of which will be found familiar to those that have used the "Sunny Side", and the other collections which have been in use by our Sunday-schools and churches. This makes the book immediately available, but large room is left for the learning of new pieces. Several new hymns are set to popular tunes, among which are "Rock of Ages Unto Thee", by Rev. Geo. M. Bodge, and "Lo the day of God is breaking", by Rev. C. G. Ames, set to the music of "Hold the Fort". A great variety of religious, ethical, historical, festival and other topics are found in the index. Temperance and the home sentiment are not overlooked. Twelve services for common use are found and six for the special occasions of Christmas, Easter, floral Sunday, harvest service, national occasions and a "Band of Mercy" service. The language of the services is good, but the readings and responses are sometimes too short for the best effect in reading. A temperance service should have been added to the list of special services, and a larger number of services for common use would have been welcome. The *form* of services found in the "Sunday-school Hymn, Tune and Service Book" has not been improved by later publications. "The Carol", after a careful examination and practical use, is commended to those wishing a good available Sunday-school manual of song and devotion. L. C.

September (Through the Year with the Poets.) Edited by Oscar Fay Adams. Boston: D. Lothrop & Co.

There is little especially noteworthy in the September number of Mr. Adams's anthology. The collection is chiefly in a pensive and moralizing vein, and has less reference, in most cases, to September than to the moods of thought which prevail during that month. Here and there a verse-maker addresses lines to the grasshopper or katydid, or paints the colors of the month, but most of the September singers are, as the editor says in his preface, "moralists", at least they "have turned moralists". For a change this arrangement is well. In preceding volumes the tribute-writers to the months and the ballade, sestina, triolet and villanelle fanciers were given ample space, and the change to a more prosaic order will be welcome to some readers. We fail to find many lines in the present number of much poetic value. Tennyson's "Tears, Idle Tears"

are the best presented. Mr. W. D. Howells has a delicate, true and poetical thing in "That Time of Year You Know" (p. 87); and Mr. Charles H. Lüders is represented by a bright triolet "To an Autumn Leaf" (p. 74). There are four original contributions, the writers being Mary E. Blake, Alice Williams Brotherton, James Jeffrey Roche and Henry Tyrrell; neither of them, however, equal to the author's best, except the following by Mrs. Brotherton:

SEPTEMBER.

"Lush juices of ripe fruits, splashed color flung
From Frost's first palette, purple, gold and red;
The last sweet song the meadow lark has sung—
Dirge of the summer dead."

The indexes are admirable, though not perfect; in that of authors, Mr. Adams repeats the error of stating Mr. T. B. Aldrich's birthdate as "Nov. 11, 1837". We have to object to the bulletin board feature of the preface in the next to the last paragraph. The dignity which Mr. Adams has given this anthology in so many ways should not be detracted from by any consideration of a commercial nature. It seems to us, indeed, as if the worth of the anthology, when it is bound together, would be increased by the omission of all the prefaces. The publishers are doing their part of this work in a praiseworthy manner. Typographically, this number, like each of its predecessors, is well nigh perfect. We have noticed only one error, and that a "letterary"—"gleaming" appearing for gleaning in "Farewell to Summer", p. 102. E. R. C.

THE publication of a history of the Russian state is timely just now when the history of the Russian people is just beginning and the eyes of the world are turned toward the young nation which, having made its place among the great powers of Europe, has now to look within and face the most complicated social problems of any age or people. John B. Alden, of New York, taking advantage of this deep interest in Russian affairs, has brought out a "History of Russia" translated by Leonora B. Lang from the French of Alfred Rambaud, a book which in the dearth of information on Russian historical topics heretofore accessible to English readers will doubtless find a wide welcome.

The Home.

THE SUNSET AND THE CHILDREN.

Do you ask if this is a true story? We shall see.

I had left work a little disheartened, had firmly put "school" aside, and wandered out into the fields to enjoy the cool of the early evening. "The sun hangs there like a great ball, and promises no beauty to-night", I thought, as I walked on, but stopping later and looking again found the whole sky had changed. Back in the east the moon had climbed a few feet above the horizon; off to the southwest was a dark cloud that anxious eyes had watched for hours, hoping it might bring the needed rain; this, as well as the little clouds that partly hid the moon, was tinged with crimson. But the greatest glory was just behind a strip of white cloud that lay on a delicate blue back-ground, where the sun had been a few moments before. For a half hour I stood watching the changing lights on the pale blue that shaded to a bright red where the sky touched the hills, and then I found myself thinking quietly of the children; of tired little Bessie, whose head dropped on the desk, fast asleep, she had tried so hard to write "bell"!

It was a warm day, and fancies and memory pictures ran through my thoughts. The group gathered about the water pail was larger than usual, but, in place of the old jostle and confusion, they filled the dipper and passed it kindly to one another. Then they were giving their favorite quotations. Gracie, my careless girl, was repeating with her peculiarly sweet emphasis:

"One by one thy duties wait thee,—
Let thy whole strength go to each:
Let no future dreams elate thee;
Learn thou first what these can teach."

They had organized a Flower Mission; and out in the field I saw them next, wild with glee, gathering flowers. Will their earnestness last? First it was the time of violets, now the goldenrod is here, and their baskets still make a weekly trip to Chicago, carrying the sweet freshness of woods and fields to the hospitals of the great city. Then I saw them bending over the lessons, faces lighting up with earnest effort. "The *trier* wears the halo"; and the old school house was all aglow with a light that rivaled the sunset!

"Block by block, with sure and sharp endeavor,
Life-long we build these human natures up."

Pluck, earnestness, honesty, patience, kindness,—these are what help us to build, and these give us the happiness that comes through Endeavor! Build with these and though when men and women, we may gain neither popularity nor riches, we shall have what is far better,—a name that shall always be spoken with respect; and our lives shall brighten other lives, as the sunset did the evening sky.

Yes, my story is true, and the school-children are the real authors, for they *lived* the pictures that the sunset haloed in my thought. A. M. B.

THE OLD DOCTOR'S STORY.

"I have a little story to tell you, boys", the old doctor said to the young people the other evening. "One day—a long, hot day it had been, too—I met my father on the road to town.

"'I wish you would take this package to the village for me, Jim', he said, hesitating.

"Now I was a boy of twelve, not fond of work, and was just out of the hay-field, where I had been at work since day-break. I was tired, dusty and hungry. It was two miles into town. I wanted to get my supper, and to wash and dress for singing-school.

"My first impulse was to refuse, and to do it harshly; for I was vexed that he should ask after my long day's work. If I did refuse he would go himself. He was a gentle, patient old man. But something stopped me—one of God's good angels, I think.

"'Of course, father, I'll take it', I said, heartily, giving my scythe to one of the men. He gave me the package.

"'Thank you, Jim', he said, 'I was going myself, but somehow I don't feel very strong today.'

"He walked with me to the road that turned off to the town; as he left, he put his hand on my arm, saying again, 'Thank you, my son. You've always been a good boy to me, Jim.'

"I hurried into town and back again.

"When I came near the house, I saw a crowd of farm hands at the door. One of them came to me, the tears rolling down his face.

"'Your father', he said, 'fell dead just as he reached the house. The last words he spoke were to you.'

"I am an old man, now; but I have thanked God over and over again, in all the years that have passed since that hour, that those last words were, 'You've always been a good boy to me.'"

No human being ever yet was sorry for love or kindness shown to others. But there is no pang of remorse so keen as the bitterness with which we remember neglect or coldness which we have shown to loved ones who are dead.

Do not begrudge loving deeds and kind words, especially to those who gather with you about the same hearth. In many families a habit of nagging, crossness or ill-natured giving gradually covers the real feeling of love that lies deep beneath.

And after all it is such a little way that we can go together.

—*Weekly Ithacan.*

UNITY

AND THE UNIVERSITY.

Editors, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, David Utter, James Vila Blake, William C. Gannett, John C. Learned, Henry M. Simmons, Frederick L. Hosmer; Special Editorial Contributors, John R. Effinger, Charles Douglas, Judson Fisher, Edwin R. Champlin, Horace L. Traubel, H. Tambs Lyche, Celia P. Woolley, Emma Endicott Marean, Ellen T. Leonard, and others; Office Editor, Charles H. Kerr. The editors assume no responsibility for the opinions expressed by correspondents. Communications must be marked with the real name of the writer, though not necessarily for publication.

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Notes from the Field.

Chicago.—The Union teachers' meeting convened Monday noon, at 175 Dearborn street, and was led by Mr. Jones. The second chapter of Isaiah, which was the subject of the day's lesson, is to be considered as a separate vision, prophesy, or scrap of literature, as separate as a single hymn in Watts' collection. Doctor Noyes regards the second, third and fourth chapters as one prophecy. Attention was called to the fact that the first paragraph of this chapter is identical with the first four verses of the fourth chapter of Micah This is easily explained when we accept the composite character of the book, difficult of explanation otherwise. The Messianic character of this chapter was spoken of. The idea of the "Day of the Lord" runs through the entire chapter—when Jehovah comes, when he shall at last make his influence felt, then the wicked shall suffer and the Lord's servants have their reward. Here is the very beginning of this idea that grew and grew until the Jews looked for a deliverer in the form of a great king to come and lead them to victory over all their enemies. The question was passed around whether it is reasonable to hope for an era of universal peace. Various answers were given, but the opinion prevailed that all tendencies are in the direction that will finally deliver all nations from the necessity and the practice of war.

The Pacific Coast Liberal Christian Conference.—A call for the second session of this organization is out. The circular closes with the following announcement, in which our readers will be interested:

The Conference will open with religious services on Sunday morning, November 7, at eleven o'clock, Rev. Eli Fay, of Los Angeles, preaching the sermon. Two candidates for the Liberal Christian ministry, having passed a satisfactory examination as to character and motive, will receive ordination, Rev. Dr. Stebbins delivering the Charge and Rev. C. W. Wendte extending the Right Hand of Fellowship.

On Sunday evening, at half-past seven o'clock, Prof. Joseph Le Conte, of the University of California, will give an address at the Church, on "The Relation of Evolution to Religious Thought". The Conference will reassemble on Monday morning, November 8, for organization, reports from the field and other business, and will continue in session throughout the 9th and 10th also, concluding with a general sociable, on Wednesday evening, in the church parlors. Among the topics treated, and speakers to be heard from, during the sessions are the following:

"The Suppression of Vice by Law", by Judge M. A. LUCE, of San Diego.
"The Gambling Spirit", by Rev. T. L. ELIOT, of Portland, Ore.
"The Use and Abuse of Sunday", by Rev HORATIO STEBBINS, D. D.
"The Old Faith and the New", by REV. A. W. JACKSON, of Santa Barbara.
"Laissez Faire, and Labor", by CHAS. A. MURDOCK, of San Francisco.
"The Sources and Satisfactions of the Liberal Christian Faith", by Rev. C. P. MASSEY, of Sacramento.
"Fifteen Years in the Unitarian Ministry in California", by Rev. DAVID CRONYN, of San Diego.
"Our Missionary Opportunities and Needs", by Rev. GEO. H. GREER, of Tacoma, W. T.
"In Defense of the American Doctrine of Church and State", by Rev. CHAS. W. WENDTE, of Oakland.

A fraternal invitation is extended to all interested to be present and participate in the exercises of the Conference.

If those intending to be present will notify at an early date Rev. Dr. Horatio Stebbins, 1609 Larkin street, San Francisco, or Rev. C. W. Wendte, 924 Filbert street, Oakland, Cal., it will greatly aid the plans of the committee.

HORACE DAVIS, *President*,
THOS. L. ELIOT, *Vice-President*,
A. W. JACKSON, *Vice-President*,
MRS. A. G. SOULÉ, *Secretary*,
For the Committee.

HORATIO STEBBINS,
For the First Unitarian Church, San Francisco.

CHAS. W. WENDTE,
Representing the American Unitarian Association.

Illinois Unitarian Conference.—The twenty-fifth session will be held Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, October 12, 13 and 14, at All Souls Church, Chicago. The programme, subject to one or two possible changes, will be as follows:

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12.

7:30 P. M.—Dedication of All Souls Church, (According to Special Programme).

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 13.

9:00 A. M.—Devotional Meeting, led by Rev. F. L. Hosmer, Cleveland.
10:00 A. M.—Welcome Address by the Parish.
Response by the President of the Conference.
Appointment of Committees.
Reports of Officers.
Discussion of State Work.
2:00 P. M.—"The Morality of Prohibition." Eugene Lewis, Moline, Ill.
Discussion.
3:00 P. M.—"The Work of a True Church." James H. West, Geneva, Ill.
Discussion.
7:30 P. M.—Semi-Centennial Discourse.
Unitarianism — past, present, future.
Rev. J. C. Learned, St. Louis.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 14.

9:00 A. M.—Devotional Meeting, led by Ida C. Hultin, Algona, Iowa.
10:00 A. M.—Business Session.
Report from the Western Unitarian Sunday-school Society, and Discussion of its Interests.
2:00 P. M.—"Practical Religion." Rev. Judson Fisher, Alton, Ill.
3:00 P. M.—Paper. T.B.Forbush, Milwaukee, Wis.
8:00 P. M.—Social Re-union at All Souls Church.

The members of All Souls congregation offer cordial welcome and hospitable entertainment to all interested in the work of the Conference. Come as directly as possible to the church home, corner of Oakwood boulevard and Langley avenue; taking Cottage Grove avenue cars to end of line, or Illinois Central suburban trains to Oakland. An application has been made for reduced railroad fare for delegates, and it is hoped that such an arrangement can be made.

Boston Notes.—Last Sunday our ministers gave their congregations a fragment of the Saratoga Conference in sermon or brief report, not forgetting to notify their apportionment of the Charleston church fund.
—The Ministers' Monday Club will next discuss ways and means to maintain our mission in India.
—Rev. Henry I. Bond will in October begin his Indian school of fifteen boys and fifteen girls—all little Crows.
—The new Unitarian building "wears well." Every day it is populous with a stream of eastern and western brethren and earnest sisters who find their enthusiasm increasad by discovering how many fellow-workers are advancing on their working lines.
—Two ladies have entered this year as students at Meadville. Eighteen students in all are expected. Let all ministers carefully encourage thoughtful young men and women in their parishes to dedicate their opening talents and lives to the ministry.

Oakland, Cal.—After overcoming many discouragements and three months' persistent work, Mr. Wendte has succeeded in starting a missionary movement in this place with good prospects of success, as has been the case in so many other places in the West; the first shelter for the embryonic society is offered by the Jews. In view of the fact that so many Unitarian societies have been cradled in synagogues, is it not time that the fraternal ties that bind the progressive Israelite to the modern Unitarian be more heartily and joyously recognized on both sides?

Bar Harbor, Maine.—All those who have visited the beautiful Island of Mt. Desert will be interested and glad to learn that a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals has been started there. When they recall the delightful drives with the views of mountains, woods and sea, and think of the patient horses who toiled for their enjoyment, they may feel inspired to send contributions to aid the new society, which aims to help those who cannot speak for themselves. The treasurer is Geo. H. Grant, Main street, Bar Harbor, Maine.

Luverne, Minn.—A subscriber writes: "I am in hopes when the right time comes, which I hope will be soon, to get some subscribers for UNITY. There is no regular Unitarian society here, but I think we have plenty of good material for one we are arranging to have. Mr. Clute came here and we hope to get up a little 'revival' and see if we can't do something in the way of organization."

St. Joseph, Mo.—The Christian virtue of patience is being taxed to its utmost limit among the Unity members at this place on account of Chicago tardiness. They have been waiting for the seats for their new church for three weeks, and still they have not come.

Sheffield, Ill.—Rev. J. Fisher, of Alton, Ill., is to preach at this place next Sunday.

Theodore Parker's

Lessons from the World of Matter and the World of Man.

SELECTED FROM NOTES OF UNPUBLISHED SERMONS, BY RUFUS LEIGHTON. CLOTH, 12MO, PP. 430; REDUCED FROM $2.50 TO $1.25.

"This volume is by all odds the best one-volume introduction to the great preacher. Kindling passages caught on the wing by the stenographic pencil of an appreciative listener, they give the glow and the fire of one who dispensed both light and heat in days that were dark and chilly. The reduced price ought to give this perennial book a fresh lease on life and a new field. * * * The book contains one of the best portraits of Theodore Parker extant, good enough to be cut out and framed if the owner is willing to mutilate the book."—*Unity.*

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